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"SG" AND "OO" POSITION DESIGNATIONS

QUESTION

Does the designation of supergrade, Chiefs of Stations and Bases and project positions as "SG" and "OO" serve a valid purpose? If not, may it be discontinued?

BACKGROUND

1. No documentation could be located to determine the reason for the practice of identifying supergrade positions as "SG" but it had been in effect approximately six months when the Director of Personnel approved a request, dated 11 October 1957, to add a special designation for Chiefs of Station and Bases, copy attached.

2. Although the last paragraph of the request stated: "Such procedure be only for CIA representatives in a foreign area and not to be construed as a precedent for its use in other type positions," it apparently set the precedent. In 1960, the SSA/DDS and PMCD agreed to designate project positions as "OO", thereby removing them from PRA controls.

DISCUSSION

1. Forms 261, Staffing Complement Change Authorization, are prepared showing all supergraded positions as "SG" and Chiefs of Stations or Bases and project positions as "OO". The actual grades are then handwritten on the copies for OPPB, OP/SRB and TRB/PCS, OCS and DDP/CSPD, if applicable. They are not changed on the DCI, DDI, DDS&T and DDS copies.

2. The PCR shows the positions with these designations but the CSGA's, other tabulations of positions and averages use the real grades.

3. A secretary in PMCD averages two hours a month searching through 2200 pages of the PCR for the [redacted] positions and recording the actual grades. This same searching and recording takes place in numerous office and area division personnel offices each month. NE which has [redacted] "OO" positions finds this task particularly onerous. Some offices have set up special card files for this purpose.

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4. Budget officers must obtain the position grades by any means, foul or fair, for budget projections and allocating by FAN and grade the GS-14 and above positions. They have been even more vocal in their objection to this practice than personnel officers.

5. Project positions are not uniformly set up as "OO".

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6. If the reason for this designation of positions is to avoid PRA notations in the incumbents' records, it would appear that a special incumbency allocation flag on the position which soon would become recognized as a tribute to the individual's special ability would better serve the purpose. Assignments to these positions would not require a PRA. It is unnecessary to designate supergrade positions since PRA rules do not apply where either position or incumbent is supergrade.

7. If the reason is to conceal the real grade from the incumbent, it is a doubtful tool for, as one personnel officer said: "They all know, the word always gets around."

8. Perhaps one reason is because the PCR total of supergrades does not necessarily equal the ceiling allocations which makes it appear as if there were headroom for promotion. Most supergrades understand restrictions on ceiling allocations spelled out in Agency regulations. Perhaps it is time those who don't are made aware of them, particularly if they know the grade of the job they are occupying.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Unless there are other valid and overriding reasons for designating positions as "SG" and "OO", show the actual grade for supergrades and change the designation on the other positions to a special incumbency flag to be shown along with the actual grade on the Form 261 and PCR to eliminate the excessive manual posting.

2. The policy of flagging a position simply because it is on a project should be studied and changes made, if warranted.

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Table of Organization Distribution of
Station and Base Chief Positions

1. The Deputy Director (Plans) has experienced difficulty in the assignment of key personnel to major Station and Base Chief positions due to:

- a. The varying conditions that influence the selection of a specific individual as the CIA representative in an area, such as:
 - (1) Personal knowledge of specific government officials.
 - (2) Specific knowledge of a current situation or area.
 - (3) Special talent for a specific operation or situation.
 - (4) Top management considerations.
- b. The fact that the Table of Organization structure is not able to consistently reflect these conditions.
- c. The expressed opinion by senior DD/P officials that, in the long run, it may well result in the improper reflection of the performance and ability of an individual assigned to a lower-graded position.

2. It is essential for overall management considerations that there is a definite approved grade structure because of:

- a. Budgetary purposes.
- b. Construction of Career Service Authorizations.
- c. Recruitment and assignment considerations.

3. Supergrade positions are now shown on the T/O with the designation SC. Records are kept in the Office of Personnel and the Office of the Controller. These include Chief of Station and Base positions. Any combination of Station Chief positions will lose the distinction between supergrade positions and those below that level.

- a. It is recommended that:
 - including Supergrade positions
- b. All Chief of Station and Base positions be listed on the Table of Organization without indicating a grade level.
- c. Such positions be classified under current methods and a listing of specific grades be maintained by the Office of Personnel and incorporated in the DD/P Career Service Staffing Authorization.

- c. Assignment of a GS-15 in an approved GS-14 position not require a Personal Rank Assignment nor be indicated in any way on the individual's record. Also, that such assignment be computed in the Career Service Staffing Authorization and, in effect, block a GS-15 slot.
- d. Such listings of Chief of Station or Base positions or the assignment of higher-graded personnel not affect in any way the classification of those jobs or subordinate station or base positions.
- e. Such procedure be only for CIA representatives in a foreign area and not be construed as a precedent for its use in other type positions.

Approved by
Gordon M. Stewart
Director of Personnel
11 October 1957

Initialed and dated. 11/9/59